

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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TWO ESCONDIDO STORES LOSE LIQUOR LICENSES FOR ILLEGAL SALE OF DRUGS.

Escondido – The California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) today permanently revoked the liquor licenses of two Escondido stores for selling a chemical used in the making of the illegal drug methamphetamine. ABC investigators picked up the liquor licenses of the Five Star Market, 1981 East Valley Parkway, and Golden State Liquor, 935 West Mission Avenue.

The owners of the two stores, Bilial M. Badrani and Haitham H. Mikha, were both convicted in federal court and sentenced to 33 months and 21 months respectively in federal prison. Both pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute large amounts of pseudoephedrine, listed chemical. Although Mikha has served his time and has been released, Badrani remains in jail.

Selling large quantities of pseudoephedrine is a felony and gives the Department of ABC the authority to revoke a liquor license for a “crime of moral turpitude”. The courts have made it clear that moral turpitude is inherent in crimes involving fraudulent intent, intentional dishonesty for personal gain or other corrupt purposes.

Badrani and Mikha appealed the Department’s revocation decision, but an administrative law judge, and the ABC Appeals Board upheld the revocation. In ruling in favor of ABC, the Appeals Board said, “The evils associated with methamphetamine are well documented. Numerous social problems have resulted from its unlawful manufacture, sale and use. Those who break the law by knowingly supplying essential components of the end product are aiding and abetting in the destruction of society.”

ABC is a department of the Business, Housing and Transportation Agency, which is under the direction of Secretary Maria Contreras-Sweet, a member of the Governor’s Cabinet.